

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/684,907

Examiner

Isaac M Woo

Applicant(s)

THOMPSON ET AL.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to response filed on 07/07/2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 21-24 and 27-30.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 21 January 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

SH Alam

SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the Applicant's Amendments, filed on July 07, 2004. Claims 1-20 and 25-26 are canceled. Claims 21-24 and 28-30 are allowed in previous action. Claims 21-24 and 27-30 are presented for examination.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 21-24 and 28-30 are allowed over prior art. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Due to claimed features in the amended claims 21 and 28, with applicant's persuasive arguments with amendment, the claims 21-24 and 28-30 are allowed.

For the claims 11 and 28, the prior art teaches (Sebastian et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,822,206) system and method for the step of configuring a product, representing product component knowledge of a plurality of product component in a hierarchical structure, wherein the representing step includes storing product category information in frames in the form of nodes of the hierarchical structure and storing product features and options in slots for respective nodes of the structure, outputting a set of product-specific questions.

The prior art does not teach combination step of configuring product from a plurality of product components as follows:

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The step of receiving individual answers to respective ones of the set of product-specific questions, removing at least one product-specific question from the output set of product-specific questions, prior to receiving an answer to the at least one product-specific question, in response to answered received, performing frame-based inferences of the product knowledge stored in the hierarchical structure based on answers received, and configuring a product with features and options based on the desired attributes of the at least one product component and based on inference made. The prior art does not teach, data storage system is repository of product knowledge of product components of type, style, size and attributes, the configurator subsystem builds product configurations based on data from the data storage subsystem and established data relationships, wherein the configurator includes a core module for facilitating input and output data in the system, and a frame engine for computing available configuration answers for any configuration questions posed to the user at any time, receiving values of answers received by the user interface and performing the values of answers to other questions automatically, and generating configuration data representing configuration of a desired product.

Claims 22-24 and 29-30, dependent claims, being definite, further limiting, and fully enabled by the specification, are also allowed.

3. Claim 27 allowed over prior art. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Due to claimed features in the amended claim 27, the claims 27 is allowed.

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For the claim 27, the prior art teaches (Fohn et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,076, 091) system and method for the step of configuring a product, representing product component knowledge of a plurality of product component in a hierarchical structure, wherein the representing step includes storing product category information in frames in the form of nodes of the hierarchical structure and storing product features and options in slots for respective nodes of the structure, outputting a set of product-specific questions. And quoting a price for the assembly as configured and displayed.

The prior art does not teach combination step of configuring product from a plurality of product components as follows:

The series of machine-executable program instruction for building a product component knowledge base by storing product component information related to window and door products in a hierarchical tree, wherein the hierarchical tree is composed of frames corresponding to different products component and slots within each frame corresponding to attributes of the different products components.


Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Isaac M Woo whose telephone number is (703) 305-0081. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E Breene can be reached on (703) 305-9790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

IMW
July 15, 2004


SHAHID ALAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

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